

## CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSICIAN STEVE GREEN

October 9, 2012 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)

The very popular Steve Green (b. 1957) has sold more than 3 million albums.

He was born and raised in Argentina as a missionary kid. At 16 he began writing songs and playing the guitar, and when he returned to the States at age 18 he entered an eight year period of rebellion.

"I was tired of being alone, and I was tired of being different. I felt that Christianity was restrictive. I'd heard some people felt you didn't have to live as stringent a lifestyle as I had been taught. I wanted to find out who those people were ... and join them! I didn't want to completely abandon ship, but I did want to do some skiing in the water. I wanted to get to heaven, but I wanted to do it my way. That attitude led to eight years of spiritual decline. The upbringing I had was great. The convictions my parents had, they had for the right reasons. It's just that sometimes kids pick up on the rules and miss the heart. That's what I did. If my parents did something or didn't do something because of their love for the Lord, I didn't do it because Dad said not to do it, but I missed the 'love the Lord' part. So when I came back to the States, I was already kicking against what I perceived as rules. When I got out from under the rules, I soon tossed off all restraint" (James Long, interview with Steve Green, *CCM Magazine*, March 1996).

Steve Green was still in a condition he describes as "spiritual coldness" when he began playing music in Christian bands. He released his first single in 1975. He tutored with Larry Norman, one of the fathers of Christian rock, for a year and a half, then signed to Word Records in 1977. Green's first album with Word, *Sayin' It with Love*, was released in the next year. According to his own testimony, though, it was not until 1984 that Green got right with the Lord. He admits that "I had been a hypocrite, spouting off about God, without really knowing what I was talking about" (Ibid.).

Green has sung at ecumenical forums such as the Religious Broadcasters Association's annual convention, Moody Bible Institute's Founders Week, Billy Graham crusades, and Promise Keepers rallies. At the Promise Keepers Atlanta Clergy Conference in 1996, Green sang, "Let the Walls Come Down," referring to PK's goal of breaking down walls between denominations. Several Catholic priests were present at that conference, and Dr. Ralph Colas, who attended the event, described it in these words: "The big beat, contemporary music brought the ministers to their feet. ... Steve Green belted out repeatedly 'Let the Walls Come Down.' The 40,000 clergy shouted, whistled, clapped, and cheered as they worked to a higher and higher pitch of emotion." Dr. Colas noted further, "While there may be some good things said at a PK conference, this meeting included compromise, ecumenism, apostasy, Jesuit casuistry (end justifies the means), and hyper-emotionalism, along with a theology based on relationships rather than Biblical truth" (*Calvary Contender*, April 15, 1996). Steve Green is perfectly at home in this type of unscriptural atmosphere.

Some have contended that Green is not ecumenical and that "Let the Walls Come Down" is not an ecumenical song, but the context of Promise Keepers was most definitely ecumenical,

encouraging Roman Catholic participation and incorporating Roman Catholic speakers. Green has never repudiated his involvement in Promise Keepers, Billy Graham crusades, Focus on the Family, and other radically ecumenical forums.

Green's *The Faithful* album (1998) has two songs which promote charismatic-ecumenical error:

"There's a river ever flowing/ Widening, never slowing/ And all who waded out in it are swept away/ When it ends where its going/ Like the wind, no way of knowing/ Until we answer the call to risk it all/ And enter in/ The river calls, we can't deny/ A step of faith is our reply/ We feel the Spirit draw us in/ The water's swift, we're forced to swim/ We're out of control/ And we go where he flows" (Steve Green, "The River").

"A great movement in every place/ Is going on so fast Eternal light piercing so deep/ I am so convinced/ The prophecies that Jesus spoke/ Will soon all be fulfilled/ Everything will be made clear/ And very soon Jesus will come/ Oh, glory hallelujah/ For the Lord is pouring/ A holy fire/ The great revival's started/ Every tongue confessing/ 'Jesus Christ is Lord of all' 'Jesus Christ is Lord of all'" (Steve Green, "The Great Revival").

Those familiar with Pentecostal latter-rain doctrine will recognize the river terminology. According to this doctrine, an end-time miracle revival must precede the return of Christ. The "Laughing Revival," with headquarters in Toronto and Pensacola, used the "river" terminology to describe their movement. The theme song at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola was "The River Is Here." The chorus says,

"The river of God sets our feet a-dancing/ The river of God fills our hearts with cheer/ The river of God fills our mouths with laughter/ And we rejoice for the river is here."

Note that Steve Green sings that the "river" sweeps people away and makes them "out of control." This is precisely what happens to people who participate in the strange Laughing Revival. People are thrown to the floor and are unable to rise; they become drunken and stagger around and are unable to speak plainly. They make animal noises and laugh hysterically. We are told that these things are the works of the Spirit of God in His "latter rain" outpouring, but the "great revival" of which Steven Green sings is not revival; it is apostasy and confusion.

As we have seen, Steve Green was a staunch supporter of Promise Keepers. It, in turn, was heavily influenced by John Wimber's Vineyard movement. PK founder Bill McCartney is a member of a Vineyard congregation, and he was taught to trust his intuitions as "revelation" from God by Vineyard pastor James Ryle. The Vineyard movement also spawned the Laughing Revival. These are different aspects of the same end-time apostasy and they share many of the same unscriptural philosophies.

Steve Green also wants the world to know that he supports the non-judgmental philosophy:

"I do have personal convictions that I conduct my life by, but I'm not going to force my convictions on someone else or try to make them jump through my hoops, through the convictions I have set up for my life" (Steve Green, *MusicLine Magazine*, December 1985, p. 9).

If Steve Green's "convictions" are not based on the Word of God, if they are merely his own "preferences," of course he is right and he should not urge these upon anyone. If, on the other hand, his convictions are based solidly upon the Word of God, he has the responsibility to urge others to follow them. Timothy was instructed, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of

season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). Green’s non-judgmental philosophy sounds like a clever attempt to escape the responsibility to preach God’s standards of holiness and to reprove the works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11).

In January 1998, Green performed at the Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland, Florida, which was associated with the Assemblies of God. It was at this church that the Laughing Revival began under the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne, who blasphemously calls himself “the Holy Spirit bartender.”

In 2011 Green joined the Christian Classic Tour with Twila Paris, Michael Card, and Wayne Watson. Card is a most radical ecumenist. In 1996 he produced an album (*Brother to Brother*) jointly with fellow CCM performer John Michael Talbot, who is a Roman Catholic and prays to Mary and practices yoga. Of this venture, Card testified: “Doing this project has enabled us to become real friends. And along the way, the denominational lines have become really meaningless to me, and to John, too” (*CCM Magazine*, July 1996). Card led the singing for the “Evening of Friendship” at the Salt Lake City Tabernacle on November 14, 2004. The crowd was composed of Mormons and “evangelical” Christians of various stripes. Card said that “he doesn’t see Mormonism and evangelical Christianity as opposed to each other; they are more like the two ends of a long thread -- part of the same thing.” He said, “The older I get, I guess the more I want to integrate everything. I think it’s more important to be faithful than right” (“Songwriter puts faith to music and verse,” *Deseret Morning News*, Nov. 16, 2004).

This is Steve Green’s very dangerous crowd. Though he is more doctrinally conservative than many of the CCM artists, Green’s ecumenical philosophy and his associations are bridges to the treacherous waters of evangelicalism. (See the book *Biblical Separatism and Its Collapse* for extensive documentation of the treacherous waters. It is available as a free eBook download from the Way of Life web site.)

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